

Wisconsin's Fish & Wildlife Annual Report

1997–1998



**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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George E. Meyer
Secretary

Dear Friend:

Over the last year we have heard concern from many of you about whether your hunting and fishing license dollars are being spent on hunting and fishing programs. We were confident that they were, but our accounting system didn't make it easy to show you and we did not do an effective job of telling you how we spend your license dollars.

Well, we have restructured our accounting system so that it will be easier to show you where the money goes and we have put together this first Annual Report on Fish and Wildlife funded programs so you can see the work your license dollars support. This report will also give you an idea of how other department funds are used to benefit hunting and angling in Wisconsin.

We intend to make this an annual report to you. Please take a close look at this report and let us know how we can make it more informative for you.

Have a great year hunting and fishing in Wisconsin!

George E. Meyer

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Contents

Introduction	i
Chapter 1 Fish	1
Chapter 2 Wildlife	3
Chapter 3 Enforcement	4
Chapter 4 Facilities and Lands	7
Chapter 5 Licenses	9
Chapter 6 Regional Management	11
Chapter 7 Administration	13

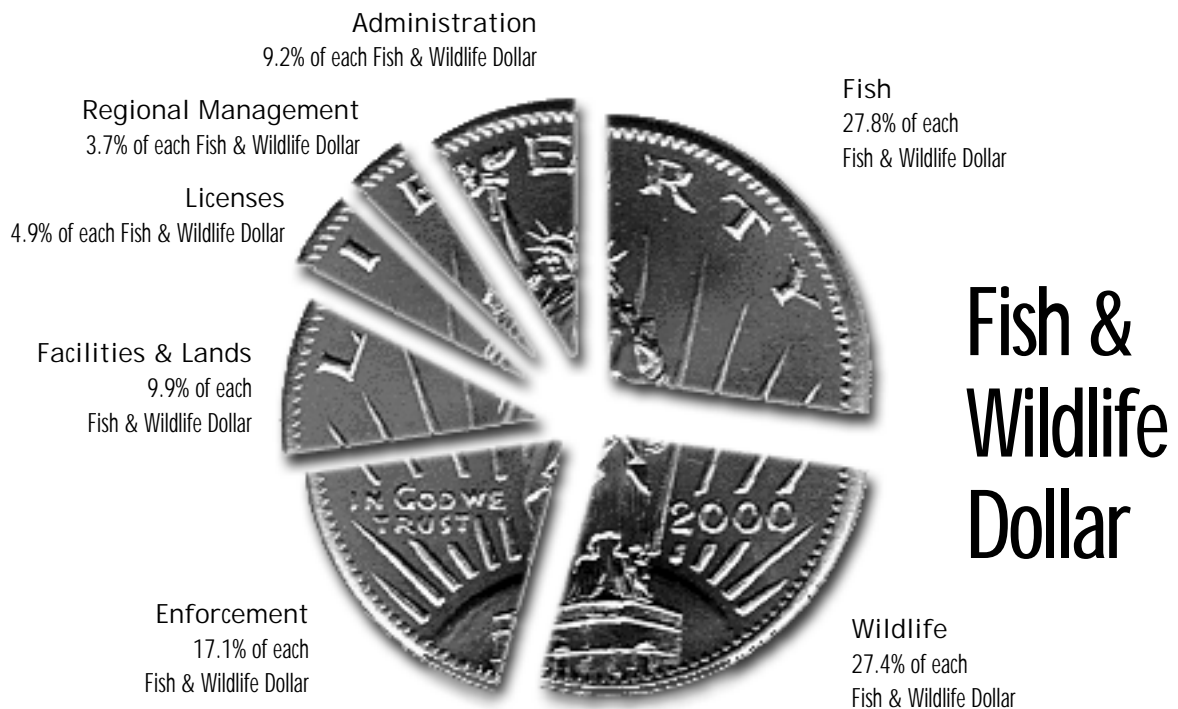




Introduction

Support from the hunting and angling community is vital. In FY98, \$67.8 million of hunters' and anglers' dollars were spent to protect and enhance fish and wildlife populations and ensure good hunting and fishing for all. The \$67.8 million represents 15.8% of the total funds DNR spends on all programs. This money covers a variety of activities that support hunting and fishing in Wisconsin such as selling licenses, paying the professionals who manage the fish and wildlife populations, communicating with the public, buying public hunting and fishing grounds, enforcing the laws, improving habitat, stocking fish, keeping conservation wardens in the field, providing legal support for land purchases and counsel in enforcement cases; conducting education and outreach; and the general costs of doing business like paying the bills and hiring staff.

For purposes of this report, the \$67.8 million Fish & Wildlife Account portion of the \$428.8 million total, is split into seven categories: Fish, Wildlife, Enforcement, Facilities & Lands, Licenses, Regional Management, and Administration. The chapters of this report will show how we spend these funds and what we achieved in each of those seven categories.



While the Fish & Wildlife funds are vital to our mission, other funding sources directly benefit hunting and angling. Maximizing the \$428.8 million the department spent in FY98 to meet all of our goals was a major purpose of reorganizing the department.

Some of these benefits are easy to see:

Forestry funds: providing 442,428 acres for camping, hiking, hunting and fishing.

Parks funds: providing habitat, fishing and some hunting programs as well as educational programs about fish, wildlife and habitat.

Boating, ATV and Snowmobile funds: providing safety programs, enforcement of laws, boat ramps and trails maintenance which gives anglers and hunters access to fishing and hunting sites.

General tax revenue and bonding (such as the Stewardship Program): providing habitat for fish and wildlife as well as public hunting, fishing and wildlife observation on about 110,500 acres of land surrounding the Chippewa, Turtle Flambeau and Willow flowages and on several large rivers in Wisconsin.

And some benefits may seem less apparent, but contribute to the quality of hunting and fishing in Wisconsin just the same:

Clean Air Funds: reducing airborne toxins like mercury that end up in the fish we eat.

Wetland Protection Funds: providing protection and mitigation of wetlands, which serve as nurseries and communities for fish and wildlife.

Non-Point Funds: providing erosion and runoff management which improve the water quality, clarity and temperature and contribute to healthy habitat for fish and wildlife to live and reproduce.

Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine: providing information and entertainment to hunters and anglers, as well as keeping non-hunters and non-anglers in Wisconsin informed on important issues. It is provided as part of the Conservation Patron License benefits.



\$428.8 million total DNR Costs FY98